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Kew, Richmond, Surrey
England
November 13, 1960

Dr. Mildred E. Mathias
Chairman of the Council, ASPT
Department of Botany
405 Hilgard Avenue
Los Angeles 24, Calif.

Dear Mildred:

Your letter of Sept. 29 has just reached me via the Royal Botanic Gardens. It must have been forwarded by rather slow surface mail. As you have probably learned from Harlan by now, I have not yet faced the task of readjusting to normal academic life. It will be rough come Feb. 1 when I do face classes again. However, I am keeping my hand in the lecturing game a bit by giving lectures sporadically here. Last week I lectured on New Caledonia at Kew and the next day on New Guinea at the B. M. Apparently at least the Kew lecture was well received, for they tapped me at once for a lecture Nov. 22 on the vegetation of coastal Qld. I have to face the Linnean Society on Queensland rain forests two days later and the B. M. again on the Great Barrier Reef. Naturally I am well-supplied with kodachromes. Most of my time here, though, is devoted to browsing through the enormous collections and libraries of the two institutions. It is a delight to be able to study abundant material of taxa that were previously only names to me. I have had time to study several hundred more books and papers for my revised classification of the angiosperms. I hope to have the long paper ready to submit to the Journal of the Linnean Society before I leave here. Dr. Metcalfe is much interested in my work and has suggested that I submit it here. Of all the people here, Dr. Metcalfe has been the most helpful and most encouraging—not that the other British botanists are less than helpful and friendly too.

I see a good deal of Peter Raven at both the B. M. and Kew. With Gordon de Wolf we are the only three Yanks presently in residence here.

I am honored to be appointed as one of the two ASPT representatives to the Council of the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences. However, though a member of AAAS, I fear I am not a good choice for the job. I seldom attend the Christmas meetings partly because I object to their timing and big city locations and partly because SUI seldom gives us any help with

travel expenses. Usually the family finances allow me only one meeting a year, and I prefer to attend the AIBS meetings. Since I am scheduled to participate in a symposium on the tropical Pacific late in August at the Pacific Congress in Honolulu, it is unlikely that I shall even make the AIBS meetings next Aug. Furthermore, after two years of extensive travelling without salary (SUI has no sabbaticals) while living on fellowship funds, the family finances are a bit strained. In short, although I should like very much to be of further service to ASPT, I think you should transfer this responsibility to someone more likely to be at the AAAS meetings. Or perhaps you can suggest a good opening at some less parsimonious institution than the State University of Iowa. (If this sounds as if I am a bit restless with my Iowa position, I am.)

I enjoyed your letter of May 17, and should have answered it long ago. I have found it in my ready file. I hope you enjoyed your short visit in southern Florida. George Taylor mentioned he had been there with Dick Howard. The report sounds rather general, and I hope you did not feel your time was wasted there. As you might guess, I am now mightily involved in problems of tropical botany though my basic interests have always been directed south.

Congratulations on the splendid academic achievements of your oldest daughter. You certainly can be proud of her. There must really be something to this heredity business. Anthropology is an exciting field, and I found the natives of Australia, New Caledonia, New Guinea, and elsewhere as fascinating as the biota. I spent more than a month before leaving Brisbane roaming the rainforests, monsoon forests, and mountains of the Territory of New Guinea and of Papua. We also spent a month on our way to London in Indonesia, Singapore, Ceylon, India, Iran, and Greece. How was the trip to Amazonian Peru and Ecuador? I should like very much to see the Andes and the southern end of S. Am.--but I don't get around much anymore. Did you spend any time in the high Andes with the fabulous cushion plants of Azorella, etc.? The cushion plants of Abrotanella, Donatia, Dracophyllum, Phyllachne, etc. in the alpine areas of Tasmania were the most exciting plants I saw on that big island. What was your mission these past two trips to Peru?

Your request for umbel seeds did not go unnoted but it was a bit late for my Australian efforts, unless seed from my collections might survive the heat of drying and remain viable a year or two. However, I did pick up some seed for you of 2 Hydrocotyle spp. in the Finisterres of T.N.G. Enclosed is one: NGF number 12722, "creeping herb in dense forest shade, track between Kikiepa and Bum Bum Villages, Wantoat Patrol Post Area, Lae Sub-district, Morobe District, TNG, June 5, 1960, coll. by John Womersley and R. F. T." I have temporarily misplaced the other envelope, but will send it along when I find it. The alt. was possibly 5000'.

Our best wishes to you and the other taxonomists at UCLA.

Sincerely,